

## Medical Economics and Public Health

**Both Timely and Important**—The House of Delegates of the A. M. A. passed the following resolution at the seventy-sixth session:

"RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this House of Delegates that periodic health examinations should be conducted by medical men and neither dominated by nor controlled by lay organizations, for the reason that the relation between the patient and the physician is an individual matter, and anything that disturbs such relationship is detrimental to the best interests of the patient; and be it further

"RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this House of Delegates that every Fellow and member of the American Medical Association should live up to the spirit and letter of this resolution."

**Health Officers Recently Appointed**—According to the official bulletin of the California Board of Health, W. J. Quinn, M. D., of Eureka has been appointed health officer of Humboldt County to succeed F. R. Horel, M. D., of Arcata, who has held the office for many years. Doctor Quinn is licensed to practice medicine and surgery in California, and is a member of the California Medical Association.

J. W. Truxaw, M. D., has been appointed health officer of Anaheim, Orange County, to succeed George A. Paige, M. D. Doctor Truxaw is also a member of the California Medical Association.

Gilbert S. Vovard, M. D., has been appointed health officer of Sierra Madre, Los Angeles County, to succeed E. L. Jackson, M. D. Doctor Bovard is a member of the California Medical Association.

J. W. Camp, M. D., has received the appointment of health officer of La Habra, Orange County. Doctor Camp is a member of the California Medical Association.

Mr. M. B. Eaton has been appointed health officer of Sunnyvale, Santa Clara County, to succeed Mr. M. J. McGinnis. Mr. Eaton is not licensed to practice medicine and surgery in California, and is not a member of the California Medical Association.

**The Physician and Narcotics**—"The United States Supreme Court has just recently handed down an important decision dealing with the Harrison anti-narcotic law," says the Santa Cruz Sentinel, editorially. "The court holds," continues this editor, "that the law is strictly a revenue measure and must be so construed, interpreted and applied."

It also disposes of the more vexing problem, which has often been raised under that law, whether or not a physician may legally give small doses of morphine or cocaine to an addict under treatment.

"Dealing with this question, the court says: 'That a physician who in good faith dispenses small quantities of morphine or cocaine to an addict for the relief of conditions incidental to such addiction commits no offense within the Harrison anti-narcotic law.'

"Further on it says: 'The treatment of drug addicts and the wisdom or propriety of such treatment not being a matter for the determinates of Congress through the medium of a revenue measure.'

"The case upon which this decision was based was taken to the highest court of the land to test the powers of a physician under the law. That the court imposes the utmost trust in physicians in handling the dangerous drugs is shown by the fact that the decision does not even caution the physicians to exercise care, believing that under their oath when entering the profession they will do all in their power to aid an addict and will use wisdom and discretion in administering the treatment."

**Another Health-Prolonging Group**—A number of our members have sent in to us a most interesting document and return postcard on the stationery of a new "stay well," "positive health," "longer living," "college," "institute" association, or something of the sort. The idea of this new crowd is very much like the ideas of those that are now, and those more numerous ones that have been,

as well as some that are now and that won't be in the future. Their whole philosophy seems to be that because someone said (untruthfully) that the Chinese pay their doctors when they are well and require their services without pay when they are ill, the idea should be applied in America.

It probably would not be an exaggeration to state that the organizations that have attempted this and failed—at least for everyone except those who handled the money—would run into the hundreds.

The letter from this new organization which seems to have upset so many of our members shows on its face that it is prepared by people who have almost no fundamental conception of the problem they are undertaking. They fail to appreciate the difficulties that great governments have had in trying to apply this idealistic principle to everyday life. We anticipate that this latest of the many of these that are reported to us every year will not grow to sufficient magnitude to require any serious investigation and study by our departments that deal with problems of this character.

"'Modern medicine,' believes Doctor Sir David Bruce, 'must change its strategy in the battle against disease. It must begin the offensive and not await the attack.'"

**Five Fundamental Standards for Ambulatory Patient Services**—1. The outpatient and the bed services should be regarded as intimately associated phases of hospital work and should be unified as fully as possible as to medical staff and as to administrative organization.

2. The number of patients accepted for care should be limited and regulated according to the facilities of staff, space, and equipment.

3. Adequate records should be maintained of the medical work, the attendance, and the income and expenditure. All the medical records of a patient should be filed together.

4. Adequate laboratory service should be made available for the outpatient department.

5. Nursing service, social service and clerical service should be provided. Physicians should be able to devote their time to their patients and be freed from mechanical and clerical duties.—A. M. A. Bulletin.

**Effective Sociology**—"Are the passing of the old-fashioned hickory stick and the modern criminal wave related?" asks the Medical Standard, editorially. "So-called old-fashioned folks," cautions the editor, "think so, and take issue with the modern professors of psychology and sociology. Yet there is one modern professor who professes the beliefs of our fathers. To quote Dr. Rudolph M. Binder, of the sociology department of New York University, 'Spank 'em in moderation. Spanking is a nature physical cure for the tense nervous cause and reaction of misbehavior.' Which licenses dad to say, 'Accompany me to the wood-shed, Ernest, and we will review our lesson in sociology.'"

**Babies Come High**—"Day nurseries, convalescent homes, and fresh-air homes in New York City represent an estimated investment of over \$15,000,000," states the annual report of Association of Day Nurseries.

"The budget of the Bureau of Child Hygiene of the New York City Department of Health," continues the report, "amounts to about \$900,000 for salaries alone. A study made of the day nurseries shows that this particular type of agency is reaching not more than 9000 families in a year, and takes care of about 15,000 children as a maximum. The total cost of maintaining the day nurseries is about \$1,000,000 a year."

**Making Charity a Business Trust**—"And, really," says Harper's Magazine, "an overdevelopment of that great industry of raising money by drives and campaigns and organizations for purposes which the organizers and the drivers believe to be good may come—if it runs to excess—to be open to the same objection which concerns the diffusion of the funds of the taxpayers. It may take away from the givers whom it reaches the ability to give their own funds to objects they think about and care about. When these great ebullitions of money-raising go out of style, that will be one of the reasons for it. People will say: 'We would rather ourselves give to what we wish to help than give to you to give to what you wish to help.' That is where the drives are weak."